

Fundamental patterns of knowing nursing essay



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The kind of knowledge developed, how to organize, test, and apply in an area of specialization is determined by the general conception of the field. The knowledge that serves as the basic guidance has pattern, forms, and professional structures which act as the benchmark expectation in achieving success in service delivery. Therefore understanding these basic patterns is essential for learning and teaching nursing since they involve critical analysis of questions about what is meant by knowing and what kinds of knowledge in nursing are regarded to be of high value in terms of discipline in nursing. Nursing practice involves use of different types of knowledge. The course has provided me valuable insights into the nature and development of nursing knowledge. In an epistemological study of nursing knowledge, Carper identifies four fundamental patterns of knowing from the analysis of the conceptual and the syntactical of nursing knowledge (Jacobs, 1998). The patterns includes: The empirics, which is the science of nursing, esthetics, defined as the art of nursing, the concept of personal knowledge in nursing, and ethics, which is the concept of moral knowledge in nursing practice. In this paper, I intend to explain and explore personal knowing as an example of nursing knowledge and its contribution to nursing practice, especially with older adults. This topic is personally relevant as I work in geriatrics. In the future, I plan to continue working with the geriatric population as a nurse educator. Understanding of these patterns of knowing has the potential of expanding my basic knowledge and therefore positively influences my future nursing practice.

In recent years nurses have employed a wide range of theoretical and practical knowledge in delivering healthcare services due to increased need

for new strategies of solving modern health issues. Nursing knowledge therefore is means for achieving appropriate care for patients. With the increasing challenges and the need to and the need to resolve them, there has been the need for nurses to explore their professional beliefs to discard outdated concepts and consequently develop new and adequate knowledge to competently care for their patients. The knowledge of new strategies for patient's care will thus enable the nurse to justify their actions or stop poor practices.

Nursing knowledge can be obtained from scientific evidence through research and evaluation, it can also be drawn from experience after a period of working, and the knowledge can also be personally derived from understanding. Scientific knowledge in nursing can be acquired through research enquiry. Although the generation of scientific knowledge from research is widely accepted and used due to its practical evidence, nurses also use experiences gained through personal learning. In contrast, many writers have suggested frameworks which describe knowledge as being generated through past experience and personal understanding. Personal knowledge is the most controversial pattern of knowing in nursing practice since it is difficult to master and teach. In contrast, personal knowledge is the most essential and effective in understanding the meaning of individual well-being in terms of health. Since nursing mainly involves developing relationships through interactions and transactions between the nurse and patients, it is evident that the quality of nurse-patient interaction has a bearing on the patient coping or overcoming the illness referred to as the 'therapeutic use of self' by the nurse. It is therefore important how nurses

view themselves and their patients which can assist nurses to effectively integrate both formal scientific and informal therapies to patient treatment. Personal knowledge in nursing is the individual knowledge which is acquired through personal involvement in situations and events with patients. It is also associated with knowing, encountering and concrete self actualization in working place. Personal knowledge can be acquired through experience, trial of different approaches with unknown outcomes, and progressive practical learning through keen observation. Like scientific knowledge, personal knowledge can also be practically acquired and the gained knowledge forms part of nurse services to patients. The knowledge is usually without formal documentation or scientific research analysis but is based on individual's own understanding of the health issue and their most ideal approach for solving the problem. The importance of personal knowledge is that the knowledge is gained voluntarily without major efforts in referring to documented concepts and procedures which may be difficult to understand. Nurses therefore can use their own logical judgments to effectively handle varied client health problems. Personal knowing is also important since it allows nurses to be more innovative and confident in their work. This is important in creating positive patient-nurse relationship which can make the patients to trust in treatments given by the nurse.

Personal knowing creates flexibility in handling patient's problems, new ways which are invented are usually more efficient and less time consuming compared with the traditional scientific knowledge. Therefore they help nurses save time and attend to the needs of more patients within short time. Some personal knowing techniques like story telling to patients have since

been included in training of nurses. The strategy has widely been accepted due to its positive impacts on patient's recovery. The concept of personal knowing creates a favorable working environment for nurses and thus enables them to develop a positive attitude towards their job. Although they observe their work ethics, nurses are offered a free environment where they can integrate practical training, scientific theory, and knowledge gained through their interaction with clients. Such favorable work environment promotes effective healthcare delivery by allowing easy flow of information between doctors and nurses. In addition, since healthcare sector is highly dynamic field, new challenges which require new strategies are frequently met. Some of these challenges cannot be handled by scientific knowledge alone. As a result, personal knowledge can be used to explore and design solutions. In Gerontological and counseling centers where patient's care does not entirely involve scientific diagnosis, individual knowledge of the problem is employed to determine the nature of the problem and appropriate action initiated.

However, personal knowing is not universally accepted and various health institutions design their own strict protocols which guide their operations and service delivery. This is to protect the welfare of both their clients and staff. Nurses are state registered health workers who are bound by laws and code of ethics set by government. Like the name suggest, personal knowing is an informal personal way of understanding situations and are thus may be deemed illegal. In addition, they may be prone to mistake which may cause serious health problem to patients while cause legal penalties to the nurse. As a result strategies developed from personal knowing remains minimally

encouraged in the health sector. Since they are informal in nature, nurses may acquire effective knowledge on a particular health concern and fail to master the procedure for future use. Personal knowing may therefore cause inconsistent therapy procedures which can be questioned by patients or lead to lose of trust in the nurse. Consequently, this can cause poor patient-nurse relationship which both affects healthcare delivery, patient recovery, and to an extent institution's reputation.